

REGULAR MEETING
February 9, 2010

A Regular Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Natchez, Mississippi, was held in the City Council Chamber at 11:00 A.M. on Tuesday, February 9, 2010. Mayor Jake Middleton presided at the meeting, which was opened with prayer by Reverend LeRoy White.

MAYOR & BOARD PRESENT	ELECTED OFFICIALS ABSENT	CITY OFFICIALS & DEPARTMENT HEADS
John “Jake” Middleton Mayor		Donnie Holloway, City Clerk Coretta L. Logan, Deputy Clerk Oliver Stewart, Fire Chief
Joyce Arceneaux-Mathis Alderwoman, Ward 1		Ralph Tedder, Recreation Director Rick Freeman, Traffic Department Connie Taunton, Visitor’s Center
J. “Ricky” Gray, Jr. Alderman, Ward 2		Darlene Jones, Community Dev. David Gardner, City Engineer Natchez Democrat
Bob Pollard Alderman, Ward 3		
Ernest “Tony” Fields Alderman, Ward 4		
Mark Fortenbery Alderman, Ward 5		
Daniel Dillard Alderman, Ward 6		

MINUTES APPROVED

A motion was made by Alderman Fields to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 9, 2010. The motion was seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried with Alderman Gray and Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis opposing.

WELCOME VISITORS

Mrs. Debbie Hudson with the Chamber of Commerce stated that there are the chamber is hosting three forums on Regionalism that will be opened to the public. She added that it will be a luncheon on February 12th at the Vidalia Convention Center, a breakfast on

February 23rd at the Ferriday Arcade, and an after hours gathering at the Natchez Community Center on March 11th.

Alderman Pollard asked about the interim EDA Board.

Mrs. Hudson said that all the other groups have selected individuals to represent, which are Margaret Perkins, Glenn Green, and Pat Biglane from Natchez Now. She added that she will represent the Chamber of Commerce. James West will represent the Business & Civic League, and James Biglane is representing the Board of Supervisors. She stated that the seventh person will be selected from the board. She stated that they will be an interim group until June, when it is passed by the Legislature.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

DEPARTMENT HEADS

INSPECTION, Pawl Dawes

Mr. Dawes submitted the Financial Report for the month of January.

Mr. Dawes stated that Mrs. Kim Strawbridge has no gas in the gym which the building is owned by the city. He stated that an electric heater would be a temporary solution to the matter. He stated that it may cost around \$3,000 to fix the problem.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that there were discussions in the Finance meeting about the alternatives of the addressing the matter.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow Mrs. Strawbridge to speak before the board. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Strawbridge stated that she is the President of Natchez Gymnastics. She added that they have been in the Margaret Martin Gym for 18 years. She stated that she has lost over 40 children in 2 months due to having no heat in the gym. She stated that she has looked at every location possible and could not find anywhere suitable for the activities that the children do.

Mr. Dawes stated that the pipes are leaking and would not be able to pass the gas test with Atmos Energy.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow Mr. Dawes to go forth with collecting bids from professional services to try to facilitate keeping the gym open with heat and to discuss financial matters with the Mayor and City Clerk. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried.

Mr. Dawes stated that the requests for the routing of storm water and erosion control be directed to the property department. He added that his guys do not handle that area. He stated that he has forwarded those requests to the proper departments such as Public Works and Engineering.

Alderman Dillard stated to Mr. Dawes that he would like for him to submit the previous year's reports in the Aldermen's' boxes so that they can compare this year to last year's reports. He thanked Mr. Dawes for his efforts at 903 Westwood. There are still some vehicles there but progress is being made.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, Darlene Jones

Mrs. Jones stated that she submitted a Census partnership proposal for \$2,800 back in December to purchase t-shirts to assist with the Census awareness. She stated that she is proud to announce that she has received the funds to purchase to shirts and each board member has a shirt that was placed at their seat. She added that she would like for everyone to wear the shirts to help promote Census awareness. She said that Census awareness events have been scheduled for March 13. She stated that everyone must fill out the Census form and return it by April 1st.

Mrs. Jones stated that the Mayor's Youth Council will be selling two dollar candy bars starting next week. She added that the fundraising efforts will be to help them on their trips.

Mrs. Jones stated that the Youth Build would like to invite the Mayor and Board of Alderman to attend the Youth Build's first commencement ceremony on Sunday, February 21st at 2:30 pm at the Council Chambers.

ENGINEERING, David Gardner

Mr. Gardner stated that he needed a motion to replace Mayor Middleton with City Clerk Donnie Holloway due to the Mayor's absence and the City Clerk filled in for him. He added that he needed to get it ratified for the minutes.

Alderman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to ratify replacing Mayor Middleton with City Clerk Donnie Holloway due to the Mayor's absence. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gardner stated that Rick Freeman has installed the flashers at the hill of Canal Street.

Mr. Holloway asked how the flashers would be paid.

Mr. Gardner stated that there was going to be fundraisers to off set the costs but for the time being we will have to front the materials cost until we get reimbursed.

Mr. Dillard asked if there is an estimated time when the ARRA Project will begin construction.

Mr. Gardner stated that the award has been approved but the DB Documents have not been finalized by MDOT yet. He added that they are still waiting on MDOT'S approval to proceed.

Alderman Dillard stated he is requesting that on the three projects (North Union Street Overlay Project, ARRA Project, and Trails Project) that the construction documents be provided to the City. H indicated that he was referring to the owner's full set of the documents that were bided on with a complete description of the project per the Engineers specification and design.

Mr. Gardner stated that he can get one made. He added that in the future he will request an extra set to be submitted to City Hall. He said that they have always had the documents on file.

Alderman Dillard stated that the City is entitled to a set of drawings for all projects. He added that for the time's sake he will get with Mr. Gardner after the meeting to discuss further.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated to Mr. Gardner that the proposals need to be mailed to Washington to the people that they were going to speak with and say to them that they made an attempt to come but because of the weather they were not able to get there.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion for the City Engineer to mail copies of the three proposed projects that the City was going to lobby for in Washington. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

CITY OFFICIALS

ALDERMAN FIELDS – WARD 4

Alderman Fields stated that he would like thank the City Engineer for quickly drafting the letter to the State Conservationist. He said that he has traveled around with the Code Enforcers to Old Metcalfe and LaSalle Street. He added that this is nothing that we should take lightly.

Alderman Fields stated that he and the Mayor met with Mr. McCool from Cable One. He added that a lot of the complaints that he received were in regards to Fox. He said that Mr. McCool explained how signals had to bounce to different locations before it signals back to Natchez. He said that Mr. McCool did not foresee any rate increases. He further stated that there are other options and sources for watching television.

ALDERMAN FORTENBERY – WARD 5

Alderman Fortenbery stated that with all the rain that the City has been having, Public Works is experiencing erosion problems as well as potholes. He added that he spoke with Public Works on yesterday and they just ask for everyone to be patient with them during the weather and that they have talked with the county. The county is getting a schedule so that they can assist Public Works.

Alderman Fortenbery stated that when the weather begins to warm up, then they will begin to fill the potholes up.

ALDERMAN DILLARD – WARD 6

Alderman Dillard stated that in response to the recreation effort he would like to announce that Michael Blane, Tate Hobdy, and Willie Woods will be representing the City. He added that the Recreation efforts with the School and County are very exciting.

Alderman Dillard made a motion to appoint Michael Blane, Tate Hobdy, and Willie Woods to the Recreation Board to represent the City of Natchez. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderman Dillard stated that Duncan Park is close to being 100 years old. He added that City's commitment to recreation is well documented. He said that the golf course is continuing to be improved and there will be improvements to the tennis shop.

Alderman Dillard stated that we are looking at a drop off in our revenue. He added that we are at a 20% drop off in our revenue compared to this time last year. That includes your ad valorem, sales, franchise fees, and etc. He said that the recession has finally made its' way to our neck of the woods, but hopefully it will be a shallow one. He further stated that we are still looking at ways to cut our costs. He said that he has asked the City Clerk to prepare a revised budget to show revised revenues. He further stated that if we continue to Shop Natchez first and keep these things in place, we will be able to survive the recession.

ALDERWOMAN ARCENEAUX-MATHIS – WARD 1

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated she and Mrs. Bartley met with Mr. Gardner on January 25th at Natchez Water Works to read request for proposals for the proposed Natchez Regional Transportation Center.

ALDERMAN GRAY – WARD 2

Alderman Gray stated that was reading in the paper about gangs in our city. He said to Chief Mullins that he thinks it's a good idea to form the committee that we used to have with the sheriff and all these other people that was on it.

Alderman Gray stated that his sympathy goes out to Terrance McArthur, his father was Dr. MacArthur, and he passed away over the weekend.

ALDERMAN POLLARD – WARD 3

Alderman Pollard read the monthly report for the Natchez Fire Department.

CITY CLERK – DONNIE HOLLOWAY

Mr. Holloway stated that he would like the board to declare 14 Zoa Street as surplus property and to turn it over to the City Attorney to type up a quitclaim deed and to give it to Habitat for Humanity.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to declare 14 Zoa Street as surplus property allowing the City Attorney to type up a quitclaim deed and give the property to Habitat for Humanity. Seconded By Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Holloway asked the board to approve docket number 2551 – 3051 and docket 3065 – 3338.

Alderman Pollard made a motion to approve docket number 2551 – 3051 and docket 3065 – 3338. Seconded by Alderman Fortenbery. The motion carried with Alderman Dillard opposing it and Alderman Gray opposing against Vendor number 356157.

CITY ATTORNEY, EVERETT SANDERS

Attorney Sanders stated that he had a resolution authorizing and approving the filing of the application for Technical Energy Audit Assistance.

Alderman Pollard made a motion to approve the resolution authorizing and approving the filing the application for Technical Energy Audit Assistance. Seconded by Alderman Fields. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION

**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
CITY OF NATCHEZ**

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE FILING OF APPLICATIONS FOR TECHNICAL ENERGY AUDIT ASSISTANCE (TEAA) WITH THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI UNDER THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY & CONSERVATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM;

WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi will grant such funds to eligible cities and counties on a competitive basis; and

WHEREAS, the City of Natchez desires to obtain Fiscal Year 2010 funds for its betterment and for attainment of the National Policy Objectives as described in the Housing and Development Act of 1974, as amended; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City of Natchez, Mississippi as follows:

1. That Jake Middleton, as Mayor of the City of Natchez, is authorized to execute and file an application for the TEAA Funds; and
2. That Jake Middleton, as Mayor of the City of Natchez, is authorized to furnish on behalf of the City, such additional information as the State of Mississippi may require in connection with such application; and
3. That should any such grant funds be awarded Jake Middleton, Mayor of the City of Natchez, is hereby authorized to execute grant agreements with the State of Mississippi on behalf of the City of Natchez; and
4. That the City of Natchez engages the services of the Southwest Mississippi Planning and Development District to assist in the preparation of the City's application for Fiscal Year 2010 TEAA Funds; and
5. That should grant funds be awarded as a result of these applications, the City of Natchez will utilize the professional services of the Southwest Mississippi Planning and Development District for the administration of such funding

ADOPTED, by the City of Natchez, this the 9th day of February, 2010.

Jake Middleton, Mayor
City of Natchez

ATTEST:

City Clerk

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Middleton stated that their trip to Washington was postponed due to the weather. He added that they are in the process of rescheduling.

Mayor Middleton stated that several of them attended the MML Mid-Winter Conference in Jackson. He added that it was very good with a lot of informative meetings.

NEW BUSINESS

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she received a called from Reverend Carl Smith about the name change for the block of B Street to Beulah. She stated that he said that the Traffic Department told him that she needed to make the request.

Mr. Freeman stated that once it is approved by the board, it has to go to E911 and then he receives a letter from E911.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion to allow Ms. Russell to speak before the board in regard to the name change. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Russell stated that she is speaking on behalf of the Beulah Baptist Church, pastured by Reverend Carl A. Smith. She stated that Reverend Smith said that he had already spoken with Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis about the name change and wanted to know when it will be done because he wants to plan a ceremony during that time.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion that the City changed the name of the block of B Street from MLK to Rankin to Beulah Street. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis asked Mr. Gardner what is the status of the appeal with the MDA Disaster Recovery grant.

Mr. Gardner stated that he has given Mr. Wirt Peterson the information to make the appeal. He added that he has already prepared the grant application and all they would have to do is place it on letterhead and send it.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis made a motion that the City of Natchez declares today, February 9th, 2010 as Saints Day. Seconded by Alderman Gray. The motion carried unanimously.

Alderwoman Arceneaux-Mathis stated that she was appointed as a member of the Education Committee for the MML. She said that the committee met and discussed the necessity of training for all municipalities. She said she suggested that they make a continuous list of newly elected officials and if the newly elected officials are not showing up on the special meetings for training that they be targeted.

Alderman Gray stated that he had an opportunity to talk with Tracy Giles at the MML Conference. He said that he talked with her about some of the projects that the city has coming through MDA.

Alderman Gray stated that he got a chance to talk to Mrs. Betty Oliver with USDA and the man from DEQ.

Alderman Gray stated that he talked to Mr. Laird this morning and asked him to check on applying for the \$25,000 clean up of illegal dumpsites.

Alderman Gray stated that he has been trying to get the board to lobby for the rehab money instead of the first time buyers money. He added that this is what this community needs.

Alderman Gray stated that Ex Governor Williams Winter spoke about racial relations. He said that everybody should want the same thing, including better educations, more jobs, safe and better houses, better healthcare, and treated with dignity and respect. He stated that Mr. Winter also said that we are all apart of the same race, the human race.

Alderman Gray stated that he has abandoned properties, abandoned vehicles, and cave-ins in Ward 2. He asked Mr. Gardner if he could get someone to check around to see if the rain has washed the rocks out of the cuts in the streets.

Alderman Gray stated that he attended the customer service training through Co-Lin and he recommends that every employee, elected official, or whoever attend.

Mayor Middleton stated that he has reported to all the department heads and it is mandatory for their employees to attend. He added that he thinks it is a good idea for everyone to attend.

Alderman Gray stated that his sympathy goes out to the Chief of the Reservation for the Choctaw Indians and the Choctaws.

Alderman Pollard stated that in response to the report that Mrs. Debbie Hudson made on the Interim transition team to the EDA board he would like to appoint Mrs. Sue Stedman be placed on the board.

Alderman Pollard made a motion the Mrs. Sue Stedman be placed on the Interim transition team to the EDA board. Seconded by Alderman Dillard. The motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alderman Fields seconded by Alderman Fortenbery to Adjourn the Regular Meeting of February 9, 2010. The motion carried unanimously.

MIDDLETON

JAKE

MAYOR

ATTEST:

DONNIE HOLLOWAY
CITY CLERK